In 2022, Madagascar made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government launched a new national action plan on trafficking in persons, and the Regional Committee in the Fight Against Child Labor of Fianarantsoa conducted field visits to markets, brickmaking sites, and stone quarries to monitor child labor and raise awareness among parents. In 2022, for the first time in several years, the Ministry of Labor also compiled reports from 11 of its regional offices on child labor-related activities between 2019 and 2021, which identified 922 children working in various sectors. Finally, the government expanded daily school meals from roughly 1,200 to 2,209 public primary schools. Although Madagascar made meaningful efforts in all relevant areas. the government failed to investigate reports of some officials accepting bribes to produce and issue false identity documents to facilitate the commercial sexual exploitation of minors. Children in Madagascar are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and forced labor in domestic work. Children also perform dangerous tasks in the mica mining sector and in agriculture, including in the production of vanilla. Limited resources for the enforcement of child labor laws may impede government efforts to protect children from the worst forms of child labor, and Madagascar does not have a current national action plan for the elimination of child labor.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in Madagascar. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	43.2 (Unavailable)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	68.8
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	33.8
Primary Completion Rate (%)		63.3

Source for primary completion rate: Data from 2019, published by UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023. (1)
Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 6 (MICS 6), 2018. (2)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Agriculture	Production of vanilla and rice† (3-5)
	Fishing and deep-sea diving,† including for lobster (5,6)
Industry	Mining† gold, sapphires, quartz, mica, and tourmaline, and transporting† blocks and stones at mining sites (5-10)
	Quarrying† and crushing† stone and making gravel (6,11,12)
	Brickmaking† (5,12)
	Sorting and processing mica, sometimes using sharp tools and carrying heavy loads (5,8,13)
Services	Street work, including begging, washing cars, market vending, transporting goods, cleaning the marketplace, and scavenging garbage (5,11,14,15)
	Working as waitresses and maids at hotels and restaurants (11)
	Domestic work† (5,6,12)
Categorical Worst	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (6,11,15,16)
Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced labor in mining, fishing, quarrying, begging, and domestic work (6,11,15,16)
	Use in the production of pornography (5,15)

[†] Determined by national law or regulation as hazardous and, as such, relevant to Article 3(d) of ILO C. 182.

[‡] Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor per se under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

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Children in Madagascar perform dangerous tasks in mining and agriculture, including in the mining of mica and the production of vanilla. (3,5,17) Recent reports indicate that an estimated 10,000 children work in the mica sector, including in digging mine shafts, underground mining, hoisting loads of mica out of mines, and collecting mica waste. (5,8,11,13,17) Children also sort mica at sorting companies that prepare mica for export. (8) In addition, children are involved in mining gold, sapphires, and various crystals and gems. (9) Children in the mining sector experience hazards including work in extreme heat, carrying heavy loads and using sharp tools, underground work without proper safety equipment or sufficient oxygen, and exposure to dust and other particles. (5,6,8,9,11,16) In northern Madagascar, children engage in smallholder vanilla farming, which exposes them to long working hours and sharp tools. (3,4,11) There are also reports that children are increasingly recruited by adults to steal vanilla because they are less likely to be pursued by security forces, or subjected to mob retaliation. (18)

Children in Madagascar are vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation, including child sex tourism and use in the production of pornography, domestic servitude, and forced begging. (5,6,16) Sources indicate that some local government officials issue false identity documents to minors in exchange for bribes to facilitate child commercial sexual exploitation. (5,16,19) Family members also sometimes encourage and facilitate the commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourist locations, cities, vanilla-growing regions, and mining areas. (5,7,14-16,20) Traffickers also use children in the production of pornography, including livestream performances, in exchange for international money transfers. (5,11,15,16) In addition, child domestic workers are subjected to harsh working conditions, including long hours, poor accommodations, and low salaries, and face a higher risk of sexual abuse or commercial sexual exploitation. (5-7,11,21)

Extreme weather events, including cyclones in early 2022 and several years of droughts in the southern region of Madagascar, have exacerbated food insecurity and poverty, increasing children's vulnerability to labor exploitation. In 2022, half of the population of southern Madagascar faced acute food insecurity, while half a million people were acutely malnourished. (15,19,22) Access to education is often limited for some children, which also increases their vulnerability to child labor. The birth registration system is not uniformly enforced, and unregistered children typically are not eligible to take official exams. (5,23) While the constitution guarantees free compulsory education, some public schools require parents to pay informal fees to subsidize teacher salaries and operating costs. (5,8,24) In addition, some girls face difficulties remaining in school due to a lack of appropriate hygiene facilities and menstrual hygiene products. (5,23) Additional barriers to education include a lack of school infrastructure, insufficient numbers of teachers, food insecurity, and limited transportation to schools in rural areas. (5,23)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

Madagascar has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

	Convention	Ratification
KETTOEN	ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
A) TOO	ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	UN CRC	✓
	UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	√

The government's laws and regulations are in line with relevant international standards (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Yes	16	Article 24 of the Constitution; Article 100 of the Labor Code; Article 2 of Decree 2018-009 (24-26)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	Yes	18	Article 101 of the Labor Code; Article 10 of Decree 2007-563 (25,27)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	Yes		Article 101 of the Labor Code; Articles 10, 12, and 16–22 of Decree 2007-563; Article 19 of Decree 2018-009 (25-27)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Yes		Article 4 of the Labor Code; Articles 1, 8, and 18 of Law 2014-040; Article 15 of Decree 2007-563; Articles 333 and 335 of Law 2007-038; Article 19 of Decree 2018-009 (25-27,29,30)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Yes		Articles 15 and 23 of Decree 2007-563; Articles 333 and 335 of Law 2007-038; Articles 1, 6, 8, 13, and 22 of Law 2014-040 (27,29,30)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	Yes		Articles 13, 23, and 24 of Decree 2007-563; Article 335 of Law 2007-038; Article 1 of Law 2014-040 (27,29,30)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	Yes		Articles 11, 14, and 23 of Decree 2007-563 (27)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	Yes	18	Article 11 of Ordinance No. 78-002 (31)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	N/A*		Article 11 of Ordinance No. 78-002 (31)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	Yes		Articles 15 and 23 of Decree 2007-563 (27)
Compulsory Education Age	Yes	16‡	Article 24 of the Constitution; Article 39 of Law 2008-011 (24,28)
Free Public Education	Yes		Article 24 of the Constitution (24)
* Country has no conscription (31)			· ·

^{*} Country has no conscription (31)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the operations of enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role & Activities
Ministry of Civil Services and Labor's Division for the Prevention, Abolition, and Monitoring of Child Labor	Enforces child labor laws, coordinates and evaluates efforts to eliminate child labor, and oversees national and regional child labor coordination committees. (5,32)
Ministry of Justice	Enforces laws pertaining to violence against children, including human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. (5,32) Works with department-level courts to prosecute child labor cases. (5)
Criminal Investigation Agencies	The Ministry of National Defense's National Gendarmerie enforces laws in rural areas, while the Ministry of Public Security's National Civil Police Force Morals and Minors Brigade enforces laws in urban areas. Investigate criminal cases involving minors, including cases related to human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and the worst forms of child labor. (5,15,16,32)

[‡] Age calculated based on available information (28)

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Labor Law Enforcement

In 2022, labor law enforcement agencies in Madagascar took actions to address child labor (Table 6). However, gaps exist within the operations of the Ministry of Civil Services and Labor that may hinder adequate labor law enforcement, including insufficient allocation of financial and human resources.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Labor Inspectorate Funding	\$27,000 (11)	\$14,600 (5)
Number of Labor Inspectors	190 (11)	187 (5)
Mechanism to Assess Civil Penalties	Yes (25)	Yes (5)
Training for Labor Inspectors Provided	Yes (11)	Yes (5)
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted at Worksite	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	Unknown	Unknown
Routine Inspections Conducted	Yes (11)	Yes (5)
Routine Inspections Targeted	Yes (11)	Yes (5)
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	Yes (25)	Yes (5)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	Yes (II)	Yes (5)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	Yes (11)	Yes (5)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	Yes (7)	Yes (11)

In June 2022, the ILO provided training to 30 labor inspectors as part of its Vision Zero Fund project on how to identify cases of the worst forms of child labor. (5) In 2022, for the first time in several years, the Ministry of Labor compiled reports from 11 of its regional offices on child labor-related activities between 2019 and 2021. They were able to identify 922 children working in various sectors, including domestic work, artisanal mining, begging, street work, quarrying, brickmaking, cattle herding, agriculture, restaurants, and firewood cutting and selling. (5) The Ministry of Labor also reported that between November 2021 and April 2022, it inspected 230 companies. However, the government did not provide comprehensive information for the 2022 reporting year on the number or types of inspections conducted, violations found, or penalties imposed and collected for inclusion in this report. (5)

Research indicates that Madagascar does not have an adequate number of labor inspectors to carry out their mandated duties. (5,33) Four labor inspectors are mandated to coordinate anti-child labor efforts. (5) The government itself has noted that the current number of inspectors is insufficient, indicating that its labor inspectors are not even able to cover the formal sector, much less the informal sector, in which most child labor occurs. Labor inspectors are also not permitted to enter private homes without coordination with the judicial police, which restricts their ability to conduct labor inspections among domestic workers, many of whom are children. (5) In addition, the concentration of labor inspectors in the capital, along with lack of funds for transportation at regional offices, hampers the enforcement of child labor laws in rural areas. (11) Even though the labor inspectorate has the authority to conduct proactive unannounced and routine inspections, in practice most inspections occur in response to complaints received. (11) While new labor inspectors undergo a 40-hour course on child labor, the Ministry of Labor considers this training inadequate as it does not cover child labor in the informal sector. (5) In addition, although Madagascar's list of hazardous occupations for children was expanded in 2018, reports indicate that the government was slow to disseminate the law's new requirements and has not taken steps to enforce it. (19)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2022, criminal law enforcement agencies in Madagascar took actions to address child labor (Table 7). However, gaps exist within the operations of criminal enforcement agencies that may hinder adequate criminal law enforcement, including insufficient allocation of financial resources.

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	2021	2022
Training for Criminal Investigators Provided	Yes (11)	Yes (5)
Number of Investigations	Unknown	63 (5,15)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	Unknown	60 (15)
Number of Convictions	Unknown	Unknown (5)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	Yes (11)	Unknown (5)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	Yes (11)	Yes (5)

In 2022, the National Police and Gendarmerie continued to collaborate with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation on a case that led to the conviction of an American offender for online sexual exploitation of underage Malagasy girls. (15) The Protection of Minors Police Service (PMPM) also identified 60 cases of child labor during their investigations, while the police cybercrime unit identified 3 cases of online sexual exploitation of children. (5) During the reporting period, PMPM investigators received training on trafficking in persons, including victim identification and referral. In addition, criminal investigators received trainings organized by UNICEF and Interpol on the online sexual exploitation of children. (5) Child protection networks managed by the Ministry of Population also provided support to child survivors of several types of abuse, including the worst forms of child labor, and coordinated across government entities on child protection issues in 2022. (5)

However, research found there is a lack of funding, equipment, and transportation at all levels of government to adequately conduct criminal law enforcement efforts related to the worst forms of child labor. (5,21,34) Trafficking cases involving children are often investigated as child abuse, and thus outside the purview of courts with human trafficking expertise. In addition, criminal appeals procedures often result in suspects being released from custody, and eventually evading imprisonment. (34)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established a key mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including insufficient allocation of financial resources.

Table 8. Key Mechanism to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Activities
National Council to Combat Child Labor (CNLTE)	Coordinates programs and advises on child labor legislation and regulations. (14,35) Complements efforts of regional committees, which work in each of Madagascar's regions to identify activities to promote the elimination of child labor, and gather data as well as coordinate, monitor, and evaluate efforts. (5,11) During the reporting period, both the national and regional child labor committees held awareness-raising activities and events, including radio and television programming. (5) The regional committee of Fianarantsoa in the Matsiara Ambony region also conducted field visits to markets, brickmaking sites, and stone quarries to monitor child labor and raise awareness among parents. Finally, the regional child labor committee of Tolagnaro, which covers the Anosy region, convened a coordinating meeting in June 2022 for NGOs implementing child labor prevention programs, including those working to address child labor in the mica sector. (5) The CNLTE and regional committees lack sufficient funding to effectively operate and coordinate efforts to address child labor. (5,7,36)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including the lack of a national policy covering all worst forms of child labor.

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Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Table 7. Rey Tolleles Related to Cliffa Labor			
Policy	Description & Activities		
Joint Action Plan to Address Issues Affecting Children and Households in Mica Exploitation in the Anosy Region	Developed through a joint initiative between the Ministries of Mines, Labor, and Population, aims to reduce child labor in the production of mica in the southern region. (5,37) During the reporting period, a working group continued to organize relevant ministries and organizations to define stakeholders' roles and duties in the implementation of the action plan. (5)		
National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons†	Outlines strategy and policy to address trafficking in persons in Madagascar. In December 2022, the government officially launched the policy. (15)		
Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children in the Tourism Industry	Aims to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the tourism industry. Implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and supported by ILO and UNICEF. (38) During the reporting period, the Ministry of Tourism held a workshop in Antananarivo to validate the updated version of the code. (5,15)		

[†] Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Madagascar's National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labor expired in 2019, and the government has not adopted a new action plan. (5)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2022, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including inadequate efforts to address the problem in all sectors.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description & Activities
Social Support and Reintegration Centers†	Government programs that provide social and reintegration services for survivors of child labor exploitation. Include the Ministry of Labor's Manjary Soa Center, which provides educational support and other services to survivors of child labor. The Center for Emergency Shelter Service (Centre d'Accueil d'Urgence) in Antananarivo assists children referred by the police, including children exploited in domestic work and other urban sectors. (6,11,16) During the reporting period, the Manjary Soa Center hosted 35 children removed from child labor or who were at risk of the worst forms of child labor. (5)
Elimination of Child Labor in Madagascar's Mica Sector	Targets child labor in the mica sector in southern Madagascar by removing children from mines, facilitating education access for survivors of child labor, improving the mica supply chain, and providing families with income-generating alternatives. Implemented by Terre des Hommes, Netherlands. (17) During the reporting period, Terre des Hommes held the in-country project launch event in Fort Dauphine, and participants included representatives from the government, UNICEF, and mica exporters. (39)
Education and School Canteen Programs	Programs to provide access to meals in school and re-integrate out-of-school children into the education system. Include school canteen programs coordinated with the Ministry of National Education, and funded by partners including the World Food Program and the World Bank; Mavitrika Mianata, a school canteen program run by Catholic Relief Services and Global Communities with funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and remedial classes, run by the Ministry of Education with UNICEF support, to reintegrate out-of-school children back into the public school system. (5) During the reporting year, the government expanded daily school meals from roughly 1,200 to 2,209 public primary schools across the country, and 1,200 children received remedial classes through the Ministry of Education. (5)

For information about USDOL's projects to address child labor around the world, visit https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/ilab-project-page-search † Program is funded by the Government of Madagascar.

Although Madagascar has programs that target child labor, the scope of these programs is insufficient to address the extent of the problem, particularly in agriculture, commercial sexual exploitation, domestic work, forced begging, and mining.

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in Madagascar (Table 11).

[‡] The government had other social programs that may have included the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor. (5,11,32,40)

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	Publish complete labor law enforcement information related to child labor, including the number and types of labor inspections conducted, the number of violations found, and penalties imposed and collected during the reporting year.	2013 – 2022
	Ensure that labor inspectors receive adequate training on child labor in the informal sector and the 2018 updated hazardous work list.	2019 – 2022
	Increase the number of labor inspectors from 187 to 387 to ensure adequate coverage of the labor force of approximately 15.5 million people.	2015 – 2022
	Ensure that the labor inspectorate receives adequate funding, including for transportation, to conduct inspections in rural areas and the informal sector.	2009 – 2022
	Publish criminal law enforcement data on the number of convictions and if penalties were imposed for violations concerning the worst forms of child labor.	2013 – 2022
	Ensure that criminal law enforcement agencies have sufficient staff, equipment, and transportation to address the worst forms of child labor.	2019 – 2022
	Ensure that criminal offenses related to the worst forms of child labor are investigated and prosecuted under the relevant laws.	2020 – 2022
Coordination	Ensure that the National Council to Combat Child Labor and regional child labor committees received adequate funding to carry out their mandates.	2014 – 2022
Government Policies	Adopt a national policy to address child labor, including its worst forms.	2019 – 2022
Social Programs	Enhance efforts to eliminate barriers and make education accessible for all children, including those in rural communities, by removing informal fees; improving school infrastructure, feeding programs, staffing, and transportation services; providing access to sanitation facilities and feminine hygiene products; and increasing birth registration rates.	2011 – 2022
	Expand the scope of programs to address child labor in agriculture, domestic work, begging, mining, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children.	2014 – 2022

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